

COMMUNITY USE OF PUBLIC FACILITIES



**Interagency Coordinating Board
Montgomery County, Maryland**



March 2006

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:



Fortunately, so far this winter has been somewhat on the mild side and has not required many cancellations of school or community activities, and we all sincerely hope this trend continues. We realize it's disruptive for users and is no small challenge for this office to try and determine county-wide when activities should be permitted to go on as scheduled and when it's in everyone's best interests to simply cancel all use. Please note the item below about weather related closings to ensure you're up to date with how the system works.

User education training, in place since 2001, is still going strong and is still mandatory for new users of indoor school facilities (or new representatives of existing groups). Most who attend feel the session helps them to understand their rights and responsibilities, which is important to ensure that all groups and individuals use space responsibly and are welcomed by the facilities they use.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind users that priority guidelines have been in place for years and are included in this newsletter. This office makes a sincere effort to ensure equity and access for all categories of users.

Please review the item about our upcoming community forum, and know that all users, past and present, are invited to attend. The community forum is being held to solicit your input on how we might make the use of public facilities an even more 'customer friendly' process. We welcome your ideas on how best to meet the needs of our users and at the same time respect the concerns of primary tenants.

As we head into March, here's wishing all of our users a wonderful spring and summer season.

*Regards,
Ginny*

FIELD USE REMINDER:

Effective January 1, 2006, permits are required for all organized groups using fields. If your group does not have a permit, you may be asked to leave the field. We are collaborating with Montgomery County Police Department to enforce this new guideline.

PLANNING TO USE A HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM?

If so, then please be advised - all groups planning events in school auditoriums must come to the CUPF office and meet with a Program Specialist. This is to ensure that your group, this office and the school all share the same understanding about your group's needs, and to minimize any confusion at the time of the event. Also, remember that the person signing a rental request for your group needs to be in attendance at the event. This applies to ALL users, because even if your group has used an auditorium previously, each event is unique.

Finally, please note that effective immediately, a charge for dressing rooms will automatically be added to auditorium requests. This is based on the fact that users consistently have expected them to be available.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

CUPF will be hosting a **Community Forum**

WHEN: April 6, 2006

WHERE: County Council Office Building Auditorium
100 Maryland Avenue (1st Floor)

TIME: 7:00 – 8:30 PM

RSVP: 240-777-2705.

Questions may be emailed to the ICB no later than March 28, 2006, to jill.lawson@montgomerycountymd.gov.

If a special accommodation or interpreter is required, please make your request by March 30th by calling 240-777-2723.

- - -

In addition, the ICB holds regular quarterly meetings. Anyone wishing to provide public comment should contact the CUPF office to register. Please note, speakers must be scheduled in advance, provide written testimony, and are limited to a maximum of three minutes at the beginning of the meetings.

PROBLEMS WITH AIR CONDITIONING:

Last year, CUPF folded all utility costs, including those for heat and air conditioning, into basic rental fees, and, as such, refunds are not possible. When air conditioning failed, during hot summer months, some groups requested refunds. CUPF is exploring the possibility of compensation (some percent) when verified that air conditioning was not provided over a period of many weeks. A final decision about this is pending ICB approval.

SUMMER CAMPS:

Pursuant to the policy that began in July 2005, ALL camps must be scheduled through CUPF and camp rates apply regardless of the entity sponsoring the camp.

A NEWLY REVISED FACILITY USE AGREEMENT

must be signed by all users of public facilities. Please see Specialists/Schedulers for specifics.

WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS:

When MCPS closes schools (Monday through Friday), community use activities are also cancelled. However, on weekends and holidays and on days when schools are not closed due to inclement weather, CUPF will determine whether or not activities will proceed. Users should check the CUPF website and local media for the latest information.

SUBSIDIES:

Limited dollars are available to groups meeting the following criteria:

- Request is for Monday through Friday use in classrooms ONLY
- The program requesting a subsidy must be free to participants
- The program is led by volunteers
- The entity making the request for subsidy has a 501(C)(3) tax exempt status
- The program being offered has been documented as meeting a community need
- The program offering is targeted to residents receiving financial assistance.

ICB PRIORITIES:

Questions continue to arise about what groups have priority for placement. Please remember that CUPF staff must place users per ICB established priorities. Schools always have first priority for use, when activities are scheduled according to established deadlines.

Even when you submit your request within the required time frames, those who have submitted their requests during the two scheduling windows will see their requests processed prior to those coming in later.

When groups request space during the scheduling window, the priority order is:

- Licensed childcare providers (please note that childcare organizations do NOT maintain priority status for summer use)
- PTA events, when scheduled by August 15
- County administrative bodies
- County and Municipal Departments of Recreation
- Other publicly supported programs such as those offered by colleges or universities
- Activities of other County organizations and groups
- Non-county based groups and groups with fewer than two-thirds County residents as members
- Business/Corporate activities and events

GYM RENTALS:

Keep in mind that due to the overwhelming requests for gym time, sports teams requesting time must submit a roster of no fewer than nine persons and practice time will be limited to no more than two hours per week. Any time that is left over is then posted on the CUPF website and users may request additional time after the initial round of permitting has been completed.

CUPF TECHNOLOGY UPDATE:

Soon, online scheduling will be available for Regional Services Centers, County office buildings and Libraries, in much the same way as for indoor school facilities and ball fields. Many users are now choosing to request their space on-line. If interested in more information about CUPF and/or about scheduling on-line, visit our website at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cupf>

...AND SPEAKING OF CUPF

Interesting facts about Community Use of Public Facilities

Did you know that 97% of all groups who access public facilities via CUPF are non-profit?

Did you know the ICB is an enterprise fund, meaning no tax dollars are used to fund CUPF?

Did you know that approximately 70 percent of all revenue generated by use of school facilities is returned to MCPS to cover costs incurred as a result of community use? These dollars help defray costs of repair, replacement, utility usage, etc.

Did you know that prior to July 2003 CUPF had not increased fees for ten years? Feedback seems to be that use of County facilities is still a pretty good deal!

Please submit a Facility Use Form for both free and paid use to reserve space and ensure staff coverage. Please note that payment must be received before your event can be scheduled.



**Main Office: 240/777-2706
Message Center: 240/777-2727
Fax: 240/777-2707
Or 240/777-2717**